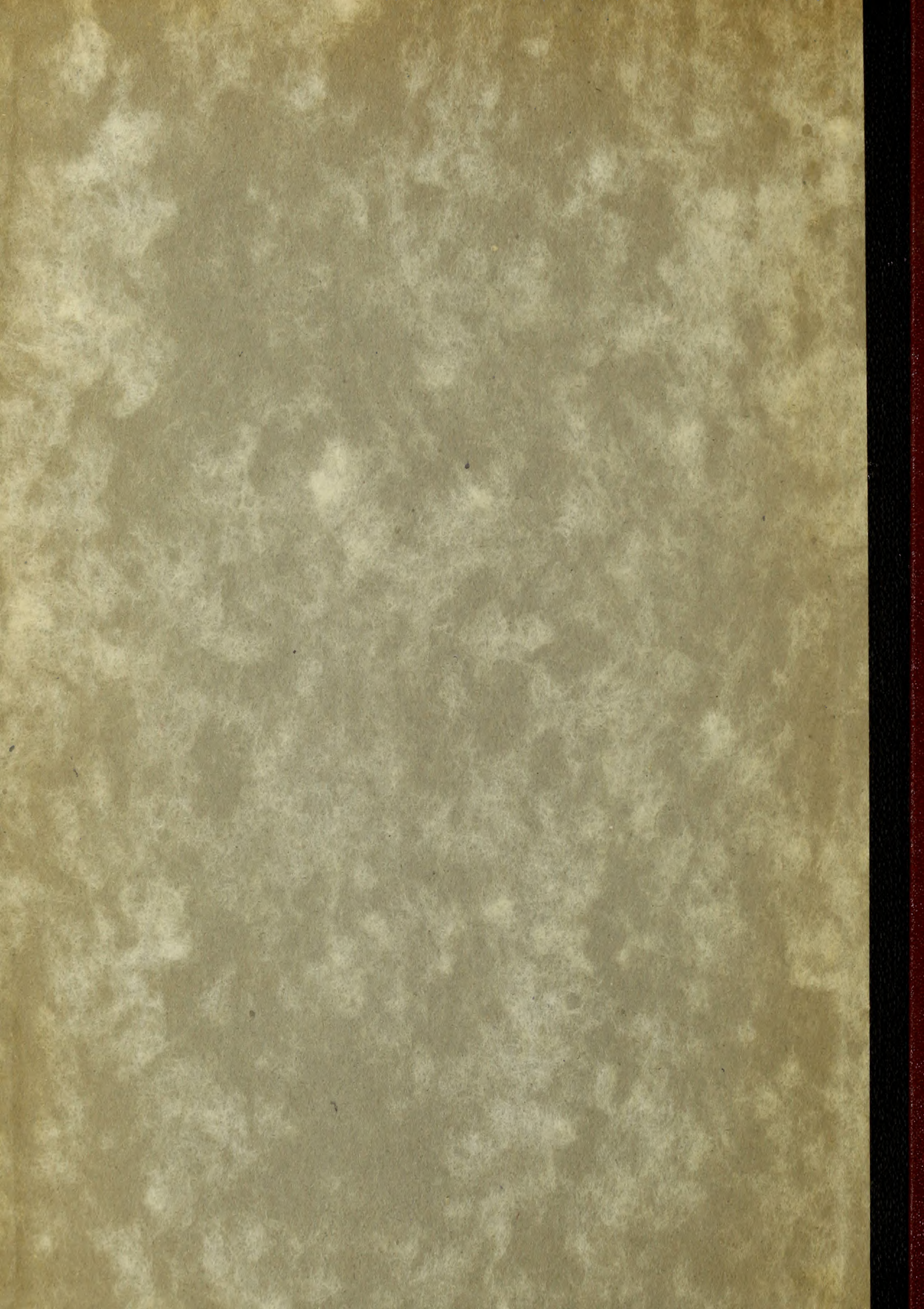


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BOSTON UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL

Thesis

THE AMERICAN-PURITAN ATTITUDE TOWARD THE
NOVEL

Submitted by

William Morris

(A.B., Olivet College, 1929)

In partial fulfillment of requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts.

1931

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2. English and American fiction compared.

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 - b. An illiberal aspect seen in Mather.
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INTRODUCTION

Although English fiction did not really begin until the Renaissance yet the prose story and metrical tale appeared much earlier, as in the "Morte D'Arthur", the "Exempla", "Reynard the Fox", and the "Canterbury Tales". Still earlier in the famous poem of "Beowulf" many legends appear. The "Scop" tells of war and bloodshed for the amusement of Anglo-Saxon chiefs. From these tales and legends of the middle ages, many of which were circulated verbally long before being written, it is evident that then, as now, man loved a story. The interest in a story has grown steadily until today fiction holds, we are all aware, a very prominent place in English literature.

American literature has, of course, the same tradition as post-Elizabethan English literature. Yet, in America the novel first appeared fifty years after the publication in England of "Pamela" by Richardson in 1740. Between 1620 and 1789 in America no fiction whatever was written, while in England in 1678 "Pilgrims Progress" was published, in 1719 "Robinson Crusoe", in 1740 "Pamela", in 1749 "Tom Jones", and on through Smollett and Sterne. In America the novel was the last literary type to appear. During the first century and a half after American colonization there was much writing in this country of historical works, theological treatises, and some bad poetry. There was an attempt at epic writing and drama; but no novels were written.

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While many reasons have been advanced for this late appearance of the novel in America perhaps the one least credible is that the Puritans did not have time to write. Cotton Mather himself is credited with four hundred works. Other writers produced theological and historical writings in abundance but "in what is sometimes called pure literature little was done, and that was of small merit."¹ Indeed we know that in proportion to the population the amount of religious writing was actually great. Even in 1800 Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore together contained only 180,000 inhabitants.² It is clear that the Puritans did write; but not novels.

Why were no novels written in the first one hundred and sixty years of American literature? One answer is given by Cairns in "A History of American Literature". Under the heading "Substitutes for Fiction" he writes, "These narratives of captivity among the Indians had an especial importance in an age when all fiction was forbidden." The Puritans then forbade fiction and narratives were found that served in its stead which Cairns goes on to say "were usually written or at least vouched for by ministers."³ The truth of these tales which may be said to have served as substitutes for fiction was always asserted and the "moral purpose avowed, though the facts are evidently colored for

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Carl Van Doren states that the positive antipathy which we have already noted, increased with great rapidity especially when native novelists began to appear. "The moralists were aroused and exclaimed against the change. The dullest critics contended that novels were lies; the pious, that they served no virtuous purpose; the strenuous, that they softened sturdy minds; the utilitarians, that they crowded out more useful books; the realistic, that they painted adventure too romantic and love too vehement; the patriotic, that dealing with European manners they tended to confuse and dissatisfy republican youth."⁴

We propose to inquire into the nature and extent of the objections to novels which both Van Doren and Cairns believe existed in the Puritan Colonies. An attempt will be made to trace the first appearance of this hostile attitude and note its development throughout the first two centuries and its wane in the first decades of the nineteenth century.

What has been the influence of Puritanism upon the novel? Mr. Stuart Pratt Sherman says, "Puritan tradition rightly understood, is one of the vital, progressive, and enriching human traditions. It is a tradition peculiarly necessary to the health

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2. The first edition is entitled "The Sovereignty and Goodness of God. A narrative of the captivity and restoration of Miss Mary Rowlandson." 1682.
3. History of American Literature, Moses Coit Tyler. pg. 138-139.
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These two views are typical examples of the views expressed by others concerning Puritan influence. It is evident that many believe that an understanding of the Puritan influence gives them the key to an explanation of later American behavior.

Let us proceed to an investigation of the facts. We shall first examine the evidence exhibited by the nature of the Puritan character and influence. The evidence to be found in the literary annals of the time will then be investigated.

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CHAPTER I
PURITAN CHARACTER AND CONTROL

John Milton stands out clearly in our minds as a great man and a Puritan. Cotton Mather was also a Puritan yet we never associate him with Milton. In many respects these men are unlike. They are chosen here to represent Puritanism in two aspects.

In the fourth decade of the seventeenth century the Puritanism to be found in England had, in some quarters, a sterner aspect than that exemplified by Milton. As an instance of the stricter outlook we note that immediately upon the election of the Long Parliament the dominant Puritan party closed the theaters in 1642 by an ordinance of both houses of Parliament. While politically identified with the Puritan party Milton distinctly maintained a more balanced and liberal viewpoint. His moral strenuousness was tempered by classical scholarship. His political writings, while often revealing uncompromising partisanship, were saved from hard fanaticism by an intense love of liberty.

Milton represents essentially a much more liberal aspect of Puritanism than was seen in America. From his writings we know that he believed in divorce; he believed in free speech; he did not hesitate to lift his voice in support of the beheading of a king; in short he believed to a certain extent in freedom. He believed in the divine nature of inspired music a view

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contrary to that of some of the American Puritans who, as Tyler states, attributed the charms of music to the devil.¹ Milton, we are convinced, believed in the good things of life. We do not infer from this, however, that he had less mind for divine things. In writing "Paradise Lost" his avowed intention was to

"Assert Eternal Providence and justify the
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In writing "Samson Agonistes" he chose a theme taken from the Old Testament. An examination of "Paradise Lost" reveals the complex theology in which Milton believed. Whatever may have been his theology, however, his was not a narrow nature.

It would not be accurate to conclude that the presence of a more liberal Puritan spirit alone accounts for the free production of fiction in England while the presence of an illiberal spirit explains its non-production in America. Other important causes such as the prevailing literary tradition and general background must be taken into account. We shall note, however, that the group which emigrated left much of the literary culture of England behind. It is to be expected that the group which differed most from the English church in religious principles, being more radical and feeling the need of freedom more keenly, would in some measure ignore, if not actually dissent from English literary tradition. This was largely the case.

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 1. History of American Literature, Moses Colt Tyler, Vol. I, pp. 222.

contrast to to the more liberal spirit seen in the English literary tradition represented by Milton. The American Puritan "felt no love in his heart for nature as poets feel it. There was little place in his heart for love of a woman. Love as a sensuous or even a romantic passion was not to be mentioned. There must be no sonnets to Stella or songs to Lucasta."¹ Mr. Moore writes, "It would not be easy outside of Puritanism to find a great religion divesting itself, so heroically not only of the smoothness and elegance but of the manifold traditions of life."² When Mr. Moore speaks of "a great religion divesting itself" he speaks of a very prominent characteristic of New England Puritanism, namely, the spirit of denial. In fact, Mr. Theodore Dreiser says that as a nation we are still forever trying to make the ten commandments work.³ We are a repressed nation, we inhibit, we forbid.

The spirit of denial which existed in early colonial days is seen in the laws of the Puritans against such defections as taking tobacco, Sabbath-breaking, neglect of public worship, and idleness. Wigs were abominations while public opinion was against even the wearing of long hair.⁴ The following lines taken from "The Day of Doom" by Michael Wigglesworth are illuminating.

"But unto you (the children) I shall
allow the easiest room in hell."

1. History of American Literature, Moses Coit Tyler. Vol.I pg.113.
2. A New England Group and Others, Shelburne Essays. P.E.Moore pg.10
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4. History of American Literature, Moses Coit Tyler.Vol.I pgs.105-6.

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This reveals a strict Calvinistic, fatalistic, doctrine; but the better nature of Wigglesworth revolted against this fatalism. To better matters he gave the children the easiest room in hell. A punishment which still more clearly reveals the unrelenting Puritan spirit. The witchcraft trials (a blot on the history of Puritanism) are another example of Puritan severity.

The Puritan objected to art. He has found the splendor of God to be exclusively in the "realm of man's moral struggle for the purification of his will."¹ He has never found the splendor of God in beautiful things. This is shown in the literature of New England. "He turned away from the playful and sensuous verse of Chaucer and his innumerable sons, from the secular prose writings of his contemporaries, and from all forms of modern lyric verse except the Calvinistic hymn."² He shut himself out from many realms of beauty in literature.

If there was any aesthetic sense within them it was "crushed down and almost trampled out by the fell tyranny of their creed."³ As an indication of the neglect of beauty found in Puritan literature we may quote Mather. In the preface to the "Bay Psalm Book" he says, "If the verses are not alwaies so smooth and elegant as some may desire or expect, let them consider that God's altar needs no pollishings."

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2. History of American Literature, Moses Coit Tyler. Vol. I pg. 265.

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2. History of American Literature, Moses Gott Tyler, Vol. I, pg. 232.
3. Ibid., pg. 112.

without the assistance of an attractive form.

Of this spirit of denial Waldo Frank speaks thus, "Alone the Puritan in his adjustment to pioneer conditions needed no great psychological conversion. Each other emigrant had sailed to our shores bearing with him the culture, the religion, the habits of sense and mind of a mother country. The rude demands of the frontier compelled him to throw off his culture, reform his mental habits, convert his energy, a painful and imperfect process: But the Puritan had done all these things before he came. He had denied the English culture, swerving to the farther pole from the rich expression that was Shakespeare. He had denied his church. He had denied all of the inner English life that was stored up in the forms and manners of the English realism. His dissenting way and the dissenting way of the pioneer were already one before he went upon it."¹

In order to understand the Puritan character we must consider the effect of the conditions of New England upon him. These conditions exaggerated the seclusion into which the Puritan had withdrawn themselves both physically and spiritually. They were withdrawn from contact with secular tradition; they were withdrawn from even the art of Milton. The hardships which they encountered intensified their belief that life is a perpetual battle with the power of evil.

We cannot leave an examination of Puritan character without presenting another view. Stewart P. Sherman finds Puritanism to

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be an enriching tradition. Mr. Sherman goes on to say that the modern spirit contains "All the essentials of the eternal Puritan, **namely**, dissatisfaction with the past, courage to break sharply from it, a vision of a better life, readiness to accept a discipline in order to attain that better life, and a serious desire to make that better life prevail."¹

This Puritan character was the ruling element in the early days of colonization in America. The Puritans had established a religious commonwealth for the purpose of worshipping God as their consciences dictated. Those who came into conflict with them because they thought differently were told to go elsewhere.² The banishment of Roger Williams from Salem is a case in point.³ His offense had been to maintain that civil power had no jurisdiction over conscience. The oppression of the Quaker is another example of Puritan domination.⁴ These instances and many others easily substantiate the statement of Cairns when he says, "For the first two generations in New England the power of the clergy was practically absolute."⁵

The strength of the clergy was due in part to their abundant energy and in part to their control of the means of publicity.

1. The Genius of America, Stuart P. Sherman.
2. Cambridge History of American Literature, pg. 32. Vol. I.
3. Ibid. pg. 45.
4. Provincial Society, Adams, pg. 129.
5. History of American Literature, Cairns, pg. 27.

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This Puritan character was the ruling element in the early days of colonization in America. The Puritans had established a religious commonwealth for the purpose of worshipping God as their consciences dictated. Those who came into conflict with them because they thought differently were told to go elsewhere.² The banishment of Roger Williams from Salem is a case in point.³ His offense had been to maintain that civil power had no jurisdiction over conscience. The oppression of the Quaker is another example of Puritan domination.⁴ These instances and many others easily substantiate the statement of Cairns when he says, "For the first two generations in New England the power of the clergy was practically absolute."⁵

The strength of the clergy was due in part to their abundant energy and in part to their control of the means of publicity.

1. The Genius of America, Stuart P. Sherman.
2. Cambridge History of American Literature, pg. 32, Vol. 1.
3. Ibid. pg. 48.
4. Provincial Society, Adams, pg. 128.
5. History of American Literature, Cairns, pg. 27.

The complete domination of the press they regarded as a necessity. Robert Calef, who attacked the Mathers, found it necessary to send his manuscript to London for publication. James Franklin was cast into jail for speaking out against this control. Ecclesiastical authority declined after 1720 but as we shall observe later the momentum acquired by the Puritan influence did not stop until long after actual legislative power had gone.¹

When the eighteenth century opened, many signs of change were in the air. The third generation of native-born Americans was becoming secularized. The theocracy of New England had fallen short. In the height of the tragic folly over the supposed "Witchcraft" in Salem Increase Mather and his son Cotton had held up the hand of the judge in their implacable work. But before five years had passed, Judge Sewall did public penance in church for his share of the awful blunder, desiring "to take the shame and blame of it."²

As we go on in the period we see the "Great Awakening," which was in brief a religious revival with the usual accompaniment of "moral exaltation and physical convulsions."³ Jonathan Edwards was probably as much responsible as any one man for its beginning at all. He was thoroughly convinced that it was the work of the Divine Spirit. It lasted but a short time, even at

1. Cambridge History of American Literature, pg. 55-56. Vol. I.

2. The American Spirit in Literature, Bliss Perry, pg. 43.

3. Cambridge History of American Literature, Vol. I, Part 1, pg 61.

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1. Cambridge History of American Literature, pp. 88-89, Vol. I.
2. The American Spirit in Literature, Bliss Perry, pp. 42.
3. Cambridge History of American Literature, Vol. I, Part I, pp. 11.

its height showing distinct signs of decay. The reaction following the revival resulted in a schism in the church which ultimately led to religious apathy throughout New England. After the revolution not a trace of the old Puritan theocracy was left. Puritan influence, however, continued.

From a literary point of view it is important to understand the nature of the control exercised by this so called theocracy. In 1622 two official licensers were appointed without whose consent nothing was to be printed. "In the leading colony of New England legal restraints upon printing were not entirely removed until about twenty-one years before the Declaration of Independence."¹ In the early days "the man who showed a 'novile disposition' was asked to leave the colony; the church member found with a heretical book was frowned upon or even severely disciplined."² In all ages there is, as a rule, a more reactionary group that oppose the type of literature prevalent in that age. As we consider early American literature we must remember that if such a group had existed it would have been legislated into silence. We must also consider that such a repressive influence does not readily die even after control is lost. It goes on in different forms, and shapes the literature for years to come.

1. History of American Literature, Moses Coit Tyler.
Vol. I pg. 112-113.

2. The First Americans, Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker, pg.238.

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1. History of American Literature, Moses Gott Tyler, Vol. I pp. 112-113.
2. The First Americans, Thomas Jefferson Westendorp, pp. 436.

CHAPTER II

THE GENERAL PURITAN ATTITUDE TOWARD LITERATURE

As a preliminary indication of the sort of literature which the Puritan chose to read we will observe a few of the titles of some of the first books printed in America. The first book or tract printed in Boston was in 1675, an execution sermon, by Increase Mather, "The Wicked Man's Portion." The first book printed in Connecticut was "The Saybrook Platform of Church Discipline," which appeared in 1710.¹

Few libraries existed in these days but toward the close of the seventeenth century, Reverend Thomas Bray, an English divine who was greatly interested in colonial missions, collected and sent to various places in America small libraries, made up largely but not wholly of theological literature. Most of these were in Maryland.² In the beginning of the next century book shops became more common. "In Philadelphia books were probably imported by the general merchants but by 1714, at least, there seems to have been a shop devoted particularly to them, for Colden wrote in that year that 'our Bookseller tells me that there is not one Bible in town to be sold.' At least a dozen years earlier Abraham Delancy was selling books in New York and at the beginning of the century we know the names of nine booksellers in Boston."³

1. History of Printing, John Clyde Oswald. pg. 223-224.
2. The American Nation, A.B.Hart. pg. 313.
3. Provincial Society, J.T.Adams. pg. 114-115.

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1. History of Printing, John Clyde Oswald, pg. 283-284.
2. The American Nation, A.E. Hart, pg. 213.
3. Provincial Society, J.T. Adams, pg. 114-115.

The production of the printing shops will give a choice indication of the literary taste of the times. Miss Earle states that these printing shops printed, "no love-poems or mild tales of gallantry, as you might suspect from their alleged fascinating traits, but instead an unvaried production of dreary and dull funeral, execution, wedding, election, and baptismal sermons, and of psalm-books with here and there a "Two penny Jeering gigge," or perhaps an anagram or acrostic or "pindarick," on some virtuous citizen or industrious dame recently deceased."¹

Even by 1723 the library of Harvard College contained none of the works of Addison, Bolingbroke, Young, Milton, Swift, Prior, Steele, Dryden or Pope.² In 1734 the catalogue of T. Cox, a prominent Boston bookseller, did not contain the "Spectator" nor the works of Shakespeare or Milton. "The literary revival of the time of Queen Anne was evidently little felt in America during its inception. The facile and constant quotations from the ancient classics show ^{how} constantly and thoroughly the latter were studied."³

It is well to note that the type of literature which was imported into the South was unlike that which was imported into the New England colonies. We read concerning the period of about 1700. "Although in Virginia the same tendency was noticeable as in New

1. Customs and Fashions in Old New England, Alice M. Earle, pg. 264.
2. Catalogi librorum (Bibliothecae) collegij Harvardini, (tailpiece). B. Green, Boston. 1725-1735.
3. Customs and Fashions in Old New England, Alice Earle, pg. 273.

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2. Catalogue of the Harvard Library (Boston, 1723-1724).
3. E. Green, Boston. 1723-1724.
4. Customs and Fashions in Old New England. Alice M. Earle. pp. 273.

England to neglect the ablest contemporary writers, on the whole they show a considerable breadth of interest. Colonel Wormely seems to have been acquainted with Ovid's works, with Lord Bacon, with Plutarch, Bacon's 'Natural History,' and even owned a copy of William Penn's 'No Cross, No Crown.'"¹

This collection is a fair example of a Southern selection of books. It shows clearly the difference in attitude and taste of the Southerner towards literature and his Northern Cousins. "In none of the Middle or Southern Provinces was there anything comparable to the rigid control over men's thoughts and opinions exercised by the New England Theocracy."² The reason, of course, is obvious. The Southerner did not have the same religious ideals which urged the Puritans on. In addition he was more directly connected with English ideals and institutions. English culture was dear to him. The Southerner's outlook on life was that of an aristocratic gentleman, such as we have in England, rather than the outlook of a Puritan divine. It will be well to state at this point that the liberal Southern attitude toward literature did not effect later American fiction as did the Puritan attitude. Two reasons may be given; first, most of the later American fiction was not produced by Southerners. A reference to almost any history of American literature discloses the absence of Southern authors. Halleck explains this scarcity of Southern novelists by reasoning that the Southerners, being chiefly concerned with agriculture, lacked the stimulus of town life which producers of literature need.³

1. Institutional History of Virginia, Bruce. Vol. I Chap. IV.
2. A History of Printing in Colonial Maryland, L.C.Worth. Chap.I.
3. American Literature, Halleck. pg. 25.

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² American Literature, Hallock, pp. 25.
³ A History of Printing in Colonial Maryland, I. U. North, Chap. I.
⁴ Constitutional History of Virginia, Bruce, Vol. I, Chap. IV.

It is also well known that it was the fashion for the Southern planter to send his children to England to be educated.¹ Of course the possibility of the Puritan being affected by or of influencing the Southerner under these conditions was greatly reduced.

The shortsighted policy of the Puritan in his distaste for certain works has been revealed by the examination of the libraries and bookshops. It is surprising, however, that he read so little from the Puritan group represented by Milton and Marvell. George Herbert with his introspection, abstract thought and intense consciousness of sin, seems to have been the favorite. Milton had shown that Puritanism was not incapable of lofty flights of imagination and beauty, but the spirit of "Paradise Lost" found little reflection among the founders of New England.² Even Milton it seems was too liberal for some.

The drama which by the necessities of representation was more limited in its power of description than the novel was looked upon unfavorably. The drama, however, did appear before the novel. About 1760 the tragedy, "The Prince of Parthia," was written by Thomas Godfrey, a lad of twenty-three. It was played in Philadelphia, April 24, 1767 but few details of the performance are known.³ Quinn states that unlike the novel this first American drama had a respectable ancestry and inspiration. It was a

1. American Literature, Halleck. pg. 25.

2. The First Americans, T.J.Wertenbaker. pg. 244.

3. History of the American Drama, Quinn. pg. 16.

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2. The First American, T. T. Weyland, pp. 244.
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"The first stepping in of theatrical performances was to the tunes of lively jigs and corans on a stage. In 1713 permission was asked to act a play in the council house in Boston. Judge Sewall's grief and amazement at this suggestion of "Dances and Scenical Divertissements" within those solemn walls can well be imagined. Ere long little plays called drolls were exhibited; puppet shows such as 'Pickle Herring,' or 'Harlequin and Scaramauch.' About 1750 two young English strollers produced Otways' 'Orphans' in a Boston Coffeehouse. Prompt and strict measures by Boston magistrates nipped in the bud this feeble dramatic plant, and Boston had no more plays for many years."² During this period Philadelphia had puppet shows in 1742 but no dramatic performances and New England throughout the whole colonial time was negligible in the history of both drama and opera.³

The South presents a contrast to this. There was certainly a theatre in Williamsburg, Virginia, by 1722 and possibly earlier, but it was not successful, although occasionally used. "In New York, the 'New Theatre' was used from 1732 to 1734; it appears to have been opened again in 1739 but there is nothing known of it

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3. Provincial Society, James T. Adams, pg. 275.

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As we move forward in history we notice that the Continental Congress of 1774 sought to pledge the Colonists to discountenance "All exhibitions of shows, plays, and other expensive diversions and entertainments, and such exhibitions languished naturally in war times."²

The power to enforce this mandate belonged to the states. Congress had no authority to pass this resolution but it was respected nevertheless. The prohibition in this case was due to the approach of war. It was not the result of a religious viewpoint.³

In the period immediately following the revolution in Baltimore the theatre was the place of resort in the intervals between assembly nights. "Among the plays considered as fit to be produced were one or two of Sheridan's, as many more of Shakespeare's and some of O'Kieffe's. But the taste of the public was not critical, and none called forth such rounds of applause as 'Love in a Village' and 'Miss in Her Teens'."⁴ The Puritan attitude had not failed to make itself felt, however, even in Philadelphia. From such spectacles as these a large part of the community kept aloof. Some pronounced them to be immoral, others

1. Provincial Society, James T. Adams, pg. 275.

2. History of American Drama, Quinn, pg. 84.

3. Ibid.

4. History of the People of the United States, Vol. I, John B. McMaster, pg.84.

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denounced them as a piece of foolish and wicked extravagance. The country, they declared, was surely going to be ruined by the taste of expensive luxuries that was coming in. Young men now thought it becoming to scoff at sacred things, and frequented the play houses much more than they did the church. "A stop should be put to this, and as the theatre was the newest evil, it was quite fitting to attack there. The discussion grew warmer and warmer, till in a little while the community was divided between the defenders and the detractors of the stage. All kinds of grounds were taken, and all manner of arguments advanced. Indeed the whole range of history, ancient and modern, was ransacked for instances to prove that plays and shows had been made use of by tyrants as engines to destroy liberty, that they had been employed by virtuous rulers to promote liberty; that they were purely monarchical institutions; that they were eminently republican institutions; that they fostered vice; that they taught morality."¹

On the other hand as yet they had no theatres in Boston. It was not until the close of Washington's first administration that a company of players presented themselves in town. The opposition which the Puritans had previously shown toward the theatre, while yet strong was weakening. In order to avoid stirring up opposition and to enlist the sympathy of those in power one of the famous American companies presented a petition for leave to open a theatre under proper regulations. This was in June of 1790. Nothing was

1. History of the People of the United States, Vol. I, John B. McMaster, pg.85.

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gained by this attempt as permission was refused. A year later another petition was presented to the selectmen signed by thirty-eight gentlemen requesting that a town meeting be held and that the public opinion be ascertained. This time the petition was considered and a meeting held at Faneuil Hall. The question was stated "theatre or no theatre." Much discussion on the morality of the theatre took place but when the vote was cast the number in favor of the theatre was estimated at three to one.¹

"Such an expression of town feeling soon had its result. The matter was carried to the General Court, and a bill brought in to regulate the expense and prevent the excess of theatrical shows."² A company of comedians, in the meantime, encouraged by the townspeople, began their session in an old stable. They called the theatre "The New Exhibition Room," the plays they called "moral lectures." This was done to evade the law as yet existing against such performances. Of course, all of this was only a technical evasion of the law but for a time it succeeded. On the sixteenth of August the room was opened with dancing, tumbling, hornpipes, etc.³ As time went on and no interference took place comedians grew bold. In September an announcement was made that on the twenty-sixth of the month "Douglas and the Poor Soldier" a moral tale in five parts would be presented. Hancock, who was Governor, was not deceived

1. See the Columbian Centinel, Oct. 22 and Nov. 2, 1791.

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 2. History of the People of the United States, 3. B. McMaster, pp. 55.
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by the title. It is not surprising, therefore, that one night, while the "School for Scandal" was being played, the sheriff rushed upon the stage and carried off Sir Peter (one of the actors) to jail. The house was immediately in an uproar. "They denounced the Governor, damned liberty, and pulled down and trampled under foot a painting of the Governor's arms that hung before the stage box. (Some account of the disturbance is given in the Columbian Centinel, December 8, 1792.) The next number of the Centinel was full of cards. One expressed the thanks of Harper, the arrested comedian, for the sympathy manifested by the audience on the evening of his arrest. A second informed the public that at the request of the selectmen, the performance would be discontinued for awhile. A third card, which was presented came from the tavern keepers, and stated amid a profusion of thanks, that since the theatre has been stopped the tap-rooms had been crowded, that the tapsters no longer slept over the empty pots, and that the cry of "Coming, Sirs, Coming, Sirs," was nightly heard on every side."¹

Around the year 1800, which is about ten years later than this discussion, we read that "The pulpits still fulminated against the fatal tolerance which within a few years had allowed theatres to be opened in Boston, and which scandalized godfearing men by permitting public advertisement that "Hamlet and Othello" were to be performed in the town founded to protest against worldly pageants."²

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2. History of the United States, Henry Adams, pt. 90.

"The principal amusements of the inhabitants," said Timothy Dwight, "are visitings, dancing, etc; and unhappily in some of the **larger** towns, cards and dramatic exhibitions."¹ Things were not destined to go on in this fashion for long. "An English Traveller commented on the changed point of view in Boston, where dramatic pieces had been introduced a few years before as "moral lectures." Now that theatres were licensed Americans had run to extremes and had two theatres in Boston involving an enormous expense (Wansey pg. 113)."²

In the period immediately after 1800 the interest in the drama increased steadily. The hostile attitude which the colonists had held toward this form of entertainment changed first to acquiescence, then to interest.³

This brief history of the opposition to the drama is but an example of the Puritan spirit of denial of which we spoke previously. The attitude toward poetry also exhibits this spirit. It is not that the Puritans are entirely devoid of any poetry, but that certain forms of poetry were frowned upon. They did not object to metre as such it was the spirit of the poem which mattered. The playful and sensuous verse of Chaucer, and all forms of modern lyric, except the Calvinistic hymn were under law. We do not observe in the writings the same active opposition, however, to the condemned forms of poetry as was observed in the case of

1. History of the United States, Henry Adams, pg. 49.

2. The English Traveller in America, Jane L. Mesick, pg. 230.

3. Ibid.

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1. History of the United States, Henry Adams, p. 40.

2. The English Traveler in America, Jane L. Moulton, p. 230.

3. Ibid.

the drama.¹

We may now summarize and draw some conclusions regarding the general Puritan attitude toward literature. Writing was regarded from a standpoint of utility. They wrote history, theology, epitaphs, narratives of captivity among the Indians, etc., for practical ends. Their purpose was to inculcate principles of morality and religion. The early writings of the Puritans clearly show that they did not write to provide amusement and entertainment, and of course, in the mind of the Puritan literature which gave pleasure was furthering the end of Satan. It drew men away from the study of the Scriptures. In this preliminary study of the spirit of Puritanism we have attempted to note whether any repression was noticed in branches of literature other than the novel. Our answer is that restriction was also placed upon the drama. Some forms of verse met with censure although the objection to poetry in general was rather negligible. Our main task lies before us, namely to examine the spirit of Puritanism which discouraged and restricted the novel. It will also be our purpose to inquire into the nature and extent of the prohibitions. No attempt will be made to trace any consequence of the restrictions other than the influence on the choice of subject of the earlier novels.

1. For a short statement of Puritanism and Poetry see, *A Manual of American Literature*, Theodore Stanton. pg. 17.

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1. For a short statement of Puritanism and poetry see, A Manual of American Literature, Theodore Stanton, pg. IV.

CHAPTER III

THE PURITAN ATTITUDE TOWARD THE NOVEL

The earliest Puritans both English and American when they used the word "romance" or "novel" could have had several types of fiction in mind. In England in 1590 Thomas Lodge published his romance "Rosalynd." Thomas Nash a few years later wrote "The Unfortunate Traveller," a type of story called "picaresque." In this form of romance all that is usually attempted is to put the hero, a picaro, through a "succession of incidents and situations, designed to capture the attention of the reader by any device."¹ Later, in 1678, "Pilgrim's Progress" by Bunyan was published. "Pilgrim's Progress" is an allegorical account of a Christian's journey through this world. In 1719 Defoe published his well known work, "The Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe." The "studied commonplaceness and minute enumeration,"² place this novel in that class of realistic fiction noted for its appearance of truth and for its life-likeness.

All of these works the American Puritan may have known. A survey shows that no reference to the first two writers, Lodge and Nash was made in the early colonial days in America. Nor do the very few known private and public libraries contain a record of them. The third work "Pilgrim's Progress" we do find a record of. This work sat on the shelves of many Puritans. It was never referred to as a work deserving condemnation. Nor do we expect any antipathy to this book for the subject of it is a Christian life.

1. A Study of Prose Fiction, Bliss Perry pg. 57.

2. Ibid.

THE ROMANCE OF THE FUTURE

The earliest romance both English and American when they used the word "romance" or "novel" could have had several types of history in mind. In England in 1590 Thomas Lodge published his romance "Rosalind" which was a few years later called "The Woman in the Moon" a type of story called "romance". In this form of romance all that is usually attempted is to get the best of nature, through a succession of incidents and situations, designed to capture the attention of the reader by any device. Later, in 1633, Milton's "Lycidas" by which was published "The Christian's Journey" is an allegorical account of a Christian's journey through this world. In 1719 Defoe published his well known work "The Adventures of Robinson Crusoe". The "adventure" was a new name and a new character. "I have told novel in that sense of realistic fiction noted for its appearance of truth and for its life-likeness. All of these words the American writer may have known. A survey shows that no reference to the first two writers, Lodge and Defoe, was made in the early colonial days in America. Not so the very first private published fiction in America, a novel of the 18th century, "The Christian's Journey" which is a translation of the work of the same name. It was not until 1719 that the word "romance" was used in the sense of a work of fiction. The word "romance" was used in this sense for the first time in 1719. A study of these writers, Defoe, Milton, and Lodge, will

The fourth book "The Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe" was seldom mentioned by the early American Puritans. An examination of Elder Brewster's library reveals some few general literary works but none of these four novels. We do find in a notice of November 18, 1712 the following. A Connecticut man is "weekly asked to return the third volume of Don Quixote and take the fourth instead if he chuse."¹ This at least shows the presence of a volume of Don Quixote somewhere in Connecticut.

As we shall later observe the forms of fiction with which the Puritans were undoubtedly best acquainted were the "sentimental" novel, as exemplified by Richardson in "Pamela," and the "Gothic" novel as exemplified by Horace Walpole in his "Castle of Otranto."

The "sentimental" novel has a clearly didactic purpose. Richardson began his work with the design of teaching his readers to write. The story is told by means of letters which served as a sample of good writing. Later his plan broadened until it covered as he himself expressed it the "Art of Living." The subject of his first book "Pamela" is the temptation of a young serving-girl by her master, a certain Mr. B. This book was published in 1740. Other books by Richardson have a similar theme; the attempted seduction of a young girl, her struggle, and her final triumph.

The "Gothic" novel, another type with which the Puritans were undoubtedly acquainted, presents a contrast to the "sentimental" novel. It was called "Gothic" because of its preference for the grotesque and barbarous instead of the classically simple

1. Customs and Fashions in Old New England, Alice Earle, pg. 231.

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and civilized. An example of this type of novel is the "Castle of Otranto" by Horace Walpole published in 1764. Walpole's purpose in writing this book was to amuse and at the same time to paint the domestic life and manners of the feudal period. It was filled with impossibilities. As an excuse for these Walpole states that he intended to give a picture of the age "as agitated by the action of supernatural machinery such as the superstition of the time might have accepted." In the "Castle of Otranto" a portrait quits its panel and walks abroad, a helmet of gigantic size waves its plumes in a tempestuous manner accompanied by a hollow sound, a picture utters a great sigh and heaves its breast all without¹ apology from the author and on one page of writing.

The elements which this type of novel gave to later romances were "a hero sullied by unmentionable crimes, several persecuted heroines, a castle with secret passages and haunted rooms, and a plentiful sprinkling of supernatural terrors."² We know in what light the Puritans would regard a "hero sullied by unmentionable crimes."

We know these two types of fiction were familiar to the colonists for two reasons, first, the presence of the books themselves, and secondly, the first American novel writers patterned³ their works upon these two authors.

1. Castle of Otranto, Walpole

The English Novel Before the Nineteenth Century, Hopkins & Hughes
pg. 491

2. A History of English Literature, Moody & Lovett, pg. 294

3. The Early American Novel, L. D. Loche, pgs. 3-5.

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1. Castle of Otranto, Walpole
2. The English Novel Before the Nineteenth Century, Hopkins & Hughes, pp. 481
3. A History of English Literature, Wooly & Lovett, pp. 284
4. The Early American Novel, L. D. Hooper, pp. 2-3.

"The influence of Richardson was great. To his influence with something from Sterne, must be credited the first regular American novel, "The Power of Sympathy," a poor and stilted narrative published by Sarah Wentworth Morton at Boston in 1789."¹ In fact, Richardson was a potent influence until Scott set a new mode for the world.² Jonathan Edwards himself after reading "Sir Charles Grandison" resolved to correct faults of his own style upon its example.³ As to the "Gothic" novel when Charles Brockden Brown commenced writing he turned to William Godwin for his example. The form under which Godwin had written which L. D. Loshe calls the Revolutionary Gothic united certain characteristics of the "Gothic" and the "revolutionary" novels.⁴ Although Brown was influenced by Godwin he too ascribed the value of romances to "their moral tendency."⁵

We will now examine the early Puritan literature for indications of the attitude of the Puritan toward the novel. In his book "The Rise of Silas Lapham" William Dean Howells has one of his characters express a retrospective view of the situation when he says, "I used to like to get hold of a good book when I was a girl; but we weren't allowed to read many novels in those days. My mother called them all lies, and I guess she wasn't so very far from wrong about some of them."⁶

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1. The American Novel, Carl Van Doren, pg.3
2. The Cambridge History of American Literature, pg. 285. Vol.I.
3. The American Novel, Carl Van Doren, pg. 2
4. The Early American Novel, L. D. Loshe, pg. 20-30.
5. The Cambridge History of American Literature, pg. 289. Vol.I.
6. The Rise of Silas Lapham, Howells. Houghton Mifflin ed. pg. 122

"The influence of Richardson was great. To his influence with something from Sterne, must be credited the first regular American novel, 'The Power of Sympathy,' a poor and stilted narrative published by Sarah Wentworth Norton at Boston in 1789. In fact, Richardson was a potent influence until Scott set a new mode for the world. Jonathan Edwards himself after reading 'Sir Charles Grandison' resolved to correct faults of his own style upon its example. As to the 'Gothic' novel when Charles Brockden Brown commenced writing he turned to William Godwin for his example. The form under which Godwin had written which L. D. Loeb calls the Revolutionary Gothic united certain characteristics of the 'Gothic' and the 'revolutionary' novels. Although Brown was influenced by Godwin he too ascribed the value of romances to 'their moral tendency.'"

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1. The American Novel, Carl Van Doren, pg. 3.
2. The Cambridge History of American Literature, pg. 288, Vol. I.
3. The American Novel, Carl Van Doren, pg. 5.
4. The Early American Novel, L. D. Loeb, pg. 80-81.
5. The Cambridge History of American Literature, pg. 288, Vol. I.
6. The Rise of Silas Tappan, Howells, Houghton Mifflin Co., pg. 122.

spective this statement is. "The Rise of Silas Lapham" was published in 1885. Mrs. Lapham who makes the utterance was probably about forty years of age for she has two daughters in their teens. Mrs. Lapham made reference of course to her mother's opinion. If her statement reflected a tradition which in turn goes back to her grandmother, we are carried back three generations or to the period of about 1780 or 1790. Our purpose in quoting this passage, however, is only to show the existence of such a tradition. Later evidence more accurately indicates the period in which the tradition first began.

An examination of the works of either Cotton Mather or Increase Mather discloses no statements in regard to novel reading. It is easy to find reasons for this omission. In the first place both the Mathers may have considered the novel beneath their notice. Secondly, although the novel was undergoing a process of development, nevertheless it had not as yet, attained to full growth, so of course, it escaped attention. Another reason for this omission is the absence of novels in the community. There were few novels, the people could not read them, then why preach against an imaginary evil?

A Puritan minister, Thomas Wilde, however, gave this counsel. "When thou cans't read, read no ballads, and romances and foolish books but the Bible, and the "Plaine Man's Pathway to Heaven," a very holy book for you. Get the "Practice of Piety," etc.¹

Miss Crawford says, "No profane author was ever quoted in a discourse; and every author was profane who did not write upon religious subjects. It was a settled policy of the religious leaders

1. Social Life in Old New England, M. C. Crawford, pg. 351.

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in New England to ignore all poets except Milton and all prose writers except Bunyan."¹ If all prose writers except Bunyan were excluded certainly that ruled out all fiction writers. Of course Bunyan is considered a writer of fiction but as the theme of "Pilgrim's Progress" is a religious one it could hardly be expected to offend the Puritans.

A well known writer Jonathan Edwards evidently disapproved of novels. He "complained that some of his congregation were reading forbidden books."² As a means of using public opinion against them he gave out their names. In the opinion of Sir Leslie Stephen, Richardson's "Pamela" (1740) may have been one of the books under ban. Halleck says that there is no doubt that any Puritan church member would have been reprimanded if he had been known to be a reader of such a work as "Joseph Andrews" by Fielding. Of this same incident Boynton says, "in fact the six years of controversy which led to the dismissal of Jonathan Edwards from his Northampton Church in 1750 suggests that Richardson achieved a furtive reading almost at once for it was Edward's objection to lascivious and obscene discourse among the young people that started the whole trouble--and "Pamela" was the sensation of the day."³

"The Progress of Dulness" of 1773 by John Trumbull as satire on modern education, contains the following:

1. Social Life in Old New England, M. C. Crawford, pg. 351.
2. American Literature, Halleck, pg. 85.
3. A History of American Literature, Percy Boynton, pg. 103.

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"The Progress of Business" of 1773 by John Trumbull as a satire

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1. Social Life in Old New England, M. G. Crawford, pg. 321.
2. American Literature, Hallack, pg. 88.
3. A History of American Literature, Percy Boynton, pg. 103.

"We own that ladies sometimes read,
 And grieve that reading is confined
 To books that poison all the mind;
 Novels and plays (where shines displayed
 A world that nature never made.)
 Which swells their hopes with airy fancies
 And amorous follies of romance.
 Thus Harriet reads and reading really
 Believes herself a young Pamela,
 The high-wrought whim, the tender strain
 Elate her mind and turn her brain."

Certainly we should object to Richardson if he can "turn the brain."
 If this proscription had any effect it was of slight character.
 McMaster in describing the intellectual state of America in 1784
 says, "Nor were they ignorant of many books which no woman now,
 without a blush would own of having read. The adventures of
 Peregrine Pickle and Roderic Random were as well known to the women
 of that generation as were Leather-stockings to the women of the
 succeeding."¹ McMaster goes on to explain that many of the novels
 read were of a much less objectionable character than such works
 as "Tom Jones" and "Tristram Shandy" for the reason that the lighter
 English literature was getting purer. "Even among grave and re-
 flecting people the feeling against all works of fiction was far less
 strong than it had been when, a few years before, Sir Anthony Absolute
 pronounced the circulating library to be an evergreen tree of diabol-
 ical knowledge."² "Evelina" and "Camilla" were read with admiration.
 Other novels which were popular with the young women of that age
 were "Victoria," "Lady Julia Mandeville" and "Malvern Dale."³ It
 is impossible to know of course how much influence the Puritan
 proscription had, but it is clear that the restraint exercised by

1. History of the People of the United States, McMaster, pg.78.
2. Ibid.
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"We own that ladies sometimes read,
And grieve that reading is confined
To books that poison all the mind;
Novels and plays (where sinners display)
A world that nature never made,
Which awakes their hopes with airy fancies
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those in authority had considerably delayed the progress of reading. If many had wanted to read novels, they could have done so long before 1784 for "Pamela" was published in 1740.

Another effect of this proscription is to be seen in the type and choice of subject matter first American novels written. "The Power of Sympathy, Founded in Truth; the Hopeless Orphan or Innocent Victim of Revenge," a novel founded on incidents in real life, and "The Coquette." These stories are all of a type. They tell of the seduction of an innocent girl and have the purpose of teaching girls to beware of "seducers."

If, in writing the "Power of Sympathy," Sarah Morton had a moral purpose, that evidently, was not enough to calm the fears of some. In his "Dictionary of American Literature," Sabin says of this novel, "This work created quite a sensation and was suppressed by interested parties." Who the interested persons were we do not know, and the nature of their objection to the novel is uncertain. The citation reflects, however, the sharp interest taken in the subject and indicates that some sort of restrictive control was exercised in respect to this novel.

Another book of this type appearing was "Charlotte Temple" by Susanna H. Rowson. Of this story Carl Van Doren Says, "It has every device known to the romancer - sentimentalism, pathos, easy tears, melodrama, and moralizings without stint or number."¹

The Reverend Enos Hitchcock, who is classed by Miss Loshe as a novelist in her book "The Early American Novel," would

1. The American Novel, Carl Van Doren, pg. 5.

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1. The American Novel, Carl Van Doren, pp. 2.

probably have objected had he known of this classification. In his book, "Memoirs of the Bloomgrove Family" he sounds a note of warning against the evils of novel reading. His heroine is made to say, "Nothing can have a worse effect on the mind of our sex than the free use of those writings which are the offspring of modern novelists."¹ Susanna H. Rowson, whom we have previously mentioned, although less radical does, however, clearly state her purpose in writing the novel. In the preface to "Charlotte Temple" she says, "In novels which expose no particular vice and which recommend no particular virtue, the Fair Reader, though she may find amusement, must finish them without being impressed with any particular idea so that if they are harmless they are not beneficial. Of the letters before us, it is necessary to remark, that this error on each side has been avoided--the dangerous consequences of Seduction are exposed, and the advantages of a Female Education set forth and recommended."²

This "moralizing" of the early novelists can be readily seen as the effect of two causes. One of these causes was Richardson. He it was who, when he wrote "Pamela", gave the type for the "sentimental" novel." With the exception of Brown most of the American novelists took Richardson for a model. We might ask, why it was that Richardson was followed rather than Defoe, or Sterne, or Fielding. The answer is that the novelists were forced by

1. Memoirs of the Bloomgrove Family, Enos Hitchcock, Vol II, pg. 82.
2. Susannah Rowson, "Charlotte Temple", 1794 Edition.

probably have objected had he known of this classification. In his book, "Memoirs of the Bloomgrove Family" he sounds a note of warning against the evils of novel reading. His heroine is made to say, "Nothing can have a worse effect on the mind of our sex than the free use of those writings which are the offspring of modern novelists."¹ Susanna H. Rowson, whom we have previously mentioned, although less radical does, however, clearly state her purpose in writing the novel. In the preface to "Charlotte Temple" she says, "In novels which expose no particular vice and which recommend no particular virtue, the fair Reader, though she may find amusement, must finish them without being impressed with any particular idea so that if they are harmless they are not beneficial. Of the letters before me, it is necessary to remark, that this error on each side has been avoided--the dangerous consequences of Seduction are exposed, and the advantages of a female Education set forth and recommended."²

This "moralizing" of the early novelists can be readily seen as the effect of two causes. One of these causes was Richardson. He it was who, when he wrote "Pamela", gave the type for the "sentimental" novel. "With the exception of Brown most of the American novelists took Richardson for a model. We might ask, why it was that Richardson was followed rather than Defoe, or Sterne, or Fielding. The answer is that the novelists were forced by

1. Memoirs of the Bloomgrove Family, Susa H. Rowson, Vol. II, pp. 32.
2. Susanna Rowson, "Charlotte Temple", 1794 Edition.

Puritan pressure, to choose a form which would be least objectionable to them. This was found in Richardson. In "Pamela" the title page of the first volume states that it is now first published to cultivate the "Principles of Virtue and Religion in the minds of the youth of both sexes."¹ In the original preface to volume two he states that "he has avoided all romantic flights;"² that "rules, equalled new and practicable, inculcated throughout the whole, for the general conduct of life."³

In "Clarissa" the title page states that he has written a "History of a Young Lady" particularly showing, "The Distresses that may attend the misconduct Both of Parents and Children, In Relation to marriage."⁴

Another significant effect of this Puritan proscription is brought to our attention by Miss Lillie Deming Loshe in her work on "The Early American Novel." Miss Loshe says, "It is a significant fact that nearly all the directly didactic novels are by known writers-- writers of literary or education importance in their day-- while on the other hand the stories chiefly designed for amusement, but related to their didactic contemporaries by similarity in sentiment and manner, are almost invariably by unknown authors." This is to be expected as most of the known writers were, of course, directly in line with the Puritan influence which was even yet the strongest literary influence in the country.

1. Richardson, Brian W. Downs, pg. 59.
2. Pamela, Vol II pg, VII Everyman Ed.
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4. Richardson, Brian W. Downs. pg. 72.

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1. Richardson, Brian W. Downe, pp. 32.
2. Pamela, Vol II pg. VII Everyman Ed.
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4. Richardson, Brian W. Downe, pp. 72.

Those anonymous authors were evidently not influenced by Puritan tradition; furthermore, they probably did not want their names known. Glancing at the list of earlier novels published we note the following: In 1793 of the four novels written, one was anonymous. In 1795 one of the two written was anonymous; in 1797 five of the eight written were anonymous. Summing all this up we note that between 1793 and 1798 twenty-two novels were written of which ten were anonymous. Between 1799 and 1810 twenty novels were written of which eight were anonymous.¹ It was not popular to be known as a writer of novels, some of them didactic, at this time.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century a change in the general attitude toward all literature is seen. Many books at this time were imported and reprinted for in those days no copyright existed in America on English works. The works thereafter in demand, instead of theological works, were novels and poetry. What a change! "Fearon says that in Philadelphia 'Manfred' was received, printed and published all in one day. Walter Scott, Lady Morgan, Moore, Miss Edgeworth, Miss Porter, Lord Byron and Miss Opie were all favorites. The popularity of the Waverly novels was a subject of frequent comment."² This statement might lead us to think that this period was the beginning of a change in the attitude of the moralists toward novel reading. In one sense they did change. They protested still more loudly.

One of those who was well known and whose opinions were influ-

1. The Early American Novel, L. D. Loshe, pg. 107-112.

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1. The Early American Novel, L. D. Loeb, pp. 107-112.
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ential was Timothy Dwight. As the President of Yale from 1795 to his death in 1817 he must certainly have influenced many students. An expression of his educational ideals is to be found in his "Travels." He speaks thus, "When the utmost labour of boys is bound ed by history, biography, and the pamphlets of the day; girls sink down to songs, novels, and plays."¹ What are the consequences of this reading? "By the first novel she reads , she is introduced into a world, literally new, a middle region, between this spot which men call earth, and that which is formed in Arabian tales. Instead of houses, inhabited by mere men, women and children, she is presented with a succession of splendid palaces, and gloomy castles inhabited by tenants half human and half angelic, or haunted by downright fiends."² Dwight further adds that this imaginative world will become to her the real world. Her action, however, must be made in the real world. The food she eats, the suitors who address her, the domestics, in short all natural things will seem coarse and ugly to her. Even the voice will grate upon her ear. All this caused by reading novels. "Between the Bible and novels, there is a gulf fixed, which few novel readers are willing to pass. The consciousness of virtue, the dignified pleasure of having performed our duty, the serene remembrance of a useful life, the hope of an interest in a Redeemer, and the promise of a glorious inheritance in the favour of God, are never found in novels and of course have never been found by her. A weary, distressed, bewildered voyager amid the billows of

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affliction she looks around her in vain to find a pilot, a pole star, or a shore."¹

Dwight was not alone in his protest against the novel. Mr. Van Doren informs us that the cries of the moralists are to be found in the magazines of the day side by side with moral tales. To these magazines and periodicals we now turn our attention for indications of this prejudice against novel reading.

1. *Travels*, Timothy Dwight, pg. 518.

From 1744 until 1754 no magazine even remotely concerned with novels appear in the various magazines printed during that time which are now available. "The Christian History," published in 1745 was devoted to church matters. "The New England Magazine" and also the "New American Magazine" published during the year 1755, are also without comment in regard to fiction. "The American Magazine or General Repository" published in 1755 advertised a number of novels anonymously written with no further comment. Such titles as, "Orphan's Daughter," and "True Delicacy" indicate the nature of the works.

1. *The American Magazine*, pg. 127, June 1744.

2. *The American Magazine or General Repository*, May 1755.

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CHAPTER IV

THE EVIDENCE FOUND IN THE EARLY PERIODICALS

As early as 1744, four years after the publication of "Pamela" in England, we find some expression of a hostile attitude toward novel reading in America. In a satire written anonymously entitled "The Art of Not Thinking?" being a satire on the Sensuality and other Vices of the age, we read the following: "Have nothing to do with grave writings. I recommend reading Romances to you; as for History, I am afraid it may generally be too grave for you, affording but seldom any matter to direct you and set you laughing. There is nothing like a fit of laughter to put off a fit of reasoning."¹ Here we find simply a utilitarian reason. In substance the writer implies that one should read history in preference to romance because one can learn more useful facts by doing so.

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2. The American Magazine or General Repository, May 1769.

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1. The American Magazine, pp. 427, June 1744.
2. The American Magazine or General Repository, May 1760.

In an essay "Advice to the Ladies" one writer states: "Read a little more; read divinity, morality, history, innocent poetry, and the stories of prudent generous love."¹ The tone of the Author's advice does not suggest much deep concern. It appears rather in the way of a gentle caution. The same issue of this magazine contains a serial entitled "The Fortune Hunter" a modern tale. As the title indicates, it is of an adventuresome nature. It is evident that little anxiety is reflected in this magazine as to the deleterious effects of novels.

In the following year 1775, a reviewer of a recent novel "Juliet Grenville" expresses himself thus: "In this agreeable novel, we meet many strokes descriptive of the character of women; and the author seems to possess a command over the passions. He rouses them not, like the generality of novelists, for any impure or criminal purposes. His morality is severe; and we should pity the person, who can use his work without being warmed to benevolence and the finer feelings."² Praise and blame in one breath. Since no names are mentioned we cannot know to whom he has reference when he refers to novelists who rouse the passions for "criminal purposes."

As an indication of the strong impression made by Richardson we quote the following eulogy written forty-four years after the publication of this first novel "Pamela". Under the title "Remarks on Sir Charles Grandison" we read: "But the line, which particularly engaged my attention, was that which reflects such honor

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2. The Pennsylvania Magazine, pg. 133. March 1775.

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In the same volume Lawrence Sterne also receives no scanty praise.

EPITAPH ON LAWRENCE STERNE

"Shall pride a heap of sculptur'd marble raise
Some worthless unmourn'd titled fool to praise?

And shall we not by one poor grave stone learn
Where genius, wit, and humour sleep with Sterne?"²

From the last two extracts we conclude that it was the policy of "The Boston Magazine" to favor the writers of novels.

One writer in an essay on the "Importance of Female Education" attempts to distinguish that which is good reading from that which is not. We quote him: "With respect to novels, so much admired by the young, and so generally condemned by the old, what shall I say? Perhaps it may be said with truth, that some of them are useful - many of them pernicious - and most of them trifling. A hundred volumes of modern novels may be read, without acquiring a new idea. Some of them contain entertaining stories, and where

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1. The Boston Magazine, pp. 185, March 1784.
2. The Boston Magazine, pp. 345, June 1784.

the descriptions are drawn from nature and from characters and events in themselves innocent, the perusal of them may be harmless - They are the rattle-boxes of sixteen. The mechanic gets his pence for his toys, and the novel writer, for his books; and it would be happy for society, if the latter were in all cases as innocent play-things as the former."¹ As sweeping a condemnation of novels as one could make. How many are useful, one might ask, if one hundred volumes can be read without acquiring a new idea. Of course the idea that a novel should be useful is at the basis of the criticism.

Another novelist Fanny Burney is given unstinted praise in the following: "Miss Burney, the celebrated novelist, has presented a tragedy, From one who could so pathetically describe the suicide of Harriet, the gratitude of Mrs. Hill, and the frenzy of Cecelia, we may anticipate the tenderness of Otway, and the elegance of Rowe."² How much this statement reflects the general attitude is questionable. "The Tablet" in which we find it, although not a pretentious paper either in size or content, does claim to be by its own statement "A miscellaneous paper Devoted to Belles Letters." It probably reflects a literary rather than a general point of view.

An anonymous writer in "Some Account of the Life and Writings of the late Dr. Smollett" concerning the Expedition of Humphrey Clinker says, "Here are no extravagant characters, nor unnatural

1. The American Magazine, pg. 367, May 1788.
2. The Tablet pg. 28, June, 1795.

situations. On the contrary, an admirable knowledge of life and manners is displayed; and most useful lessons are given applicable to interesting but to very common situations."¹ A direct reference to the utilitarian idea already referred to is observed in the last sentence.

When the author of "The Female Review" Massachusetts 1796, says, "I cannot disapprove their (females) vehement attachment to many novels" he implies that the females were vehemently attached to many novels. He also implies that there were some (he was not one of them) who disapproved of this attachment.

In an "Essay on the Modern Novel" a writer says, "What effect such graceless raptures and broken periods may produce on untutored minds, let ten thousand boarding schools witness. The contagion is the more to be dreaded as it daily spreads through all ranks of people; and Miss the 'taylor's' daughter, talks now as familiarly to her confidant of swains and sentiments as the accomplished dames of genteel life. In a word, if a man of sense has an inclination to choose a rational woman for his wife, he reaches his grand 'climacteric' before he can find a fair one to trust himself with--so universaal is the corruption! These are the consequences of novels."² This writer probably refers to boarding houses for it is doubtful whether a thousand "boarding schools" existed. Miss Jane Louis Mesick in her work "The English Traveller in America" says a great many married women especially those who lived out their existence in boarding houses were much given to reading (of novels) as well as to religious and social activity as an outlet for their

1. The Massachusetts Magazine page 500, Sept. 1796.
2. Port Folio, Vol, II, pg. 106, 1802.

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2. Fort Folio, Vol. II, pt. 106, 1803.

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It is important to note this distinction between boarding schools and boarding houses, for boarding schools contain young girls, many only in their teens. The Puritans objected especially to young people having novels. The boarding houses, however, contained women of all ages. This same writer (in the Port Folio) speaks of the novel as "The Literary Opium" which there is no resisting. "Novels are the powerful engines with which the seducer attacks the female heart, and if we judge from everyday experience, his plots are seldom in vain. Never was there an apter weapon for so black a purpose. Tricked out in the trappings of taste, a loose and airy dishabille, with a staggering gait, and a wanton eye, the modern muse trips jauntily on, the child of fashion and folly."¹

In the Literary Intelligence of the Port Folio a writer reviewing "Tales of Wonder" by Monk Lewis speaks thus, "But his muse is wanton; and, though the critic may not find any of his canons violated in the pages of the "Monk", the moralist is offended by irreligious sneer, and licentious sentiment."²

In the Ladies Magazine a writer speaks of the "growing distaste" for works of fancy by serious people. The reason for this we are told, is their total inefficiency to do any good. Furthermore bad results may follow from the reading of many of them "from the

1. Port Folio, Vol. II, pg. 106. 1802.

2. Ibid. pg. 208.

circumstances of their ministering to the worst passions of the human breast. They originate no virtuous feelings, etc., on the contrary they pamper a sickly appetite for excitement never conducive to action; they nourish a profitless sentimentality foreign from true benevolence or charity."¹

It is interesting to note that this writer in his idea that novel reading is "never conducive to action" expresses an opinion almost identical with that of Timothy Dwight when he says, as we have seen, that readers are unfitted for reality by reading novels. This objection against novel reading without qualifications is absurd, nevertheless, modern psychologists speak of unhealthy states of this kind. They refer to those readers who cry on the death of a hero, who are overjoyed when he kills the villain and who "drink in" as it were, all the sentimental love talk of the hero. Such readers are not normal. All people are not effected in this way. There is a germ of truth in the objection but it was handled by them indiscriminately. This same writer also made the statement that the novel was growing in disfavor. This is open to objection for at just this period there are indications of a more liberal tendency.

We read, "The number of novels entitled to encomium of any kind is comparatively so small it would be infinitely better for a young lady never to open one, than to seize them with that total neglect of discrimination which, it is to be feared, is too often

1. Ladies Magazine, Vol. XXI, pg. 18.

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A reviewer of "Julia Severa" by J. C. Simonde de Sismonde, gives evidence of a change in the third decade of the eighteenth century in the attitude toward novels. "In the course of some remarks--we could not help dwelling a moment on the change which has taken place in the department of novel writing. We repeated the names of some of the most distinguished writers, English and continental, of the last generation, who had exercised their talents in this way; till novels and romances had become the vehicles of the finest efforts of the understanding."²

Three years later under "Recent American Novels" are read: "We remember the time when the American novel was a single diminutive volume with no attractions. Times are now changed, when the retrospect of a single year affords us the decade of indigenous works of this sort--of the causes which have operated in producing this change, the principal, indeed, is time, which has brought with it an increase of population, wealth, leisure, and education. But another and one of considerable importance, is the appearance of certain works of fancy, as the tales of Miss Edgeworth but more those literary phenomena the Scottish or Waverly novels. These have had a powerful effect in increasing the demand for works of a similar character. They have seemed to bring the practice of novel reading into better favor with

1. Port Folio Vol I. pg. 389 (1801)

2. North American Review, pg. 163, Vol XV. 1822.

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the graver part of the community, and to take off many restrictions, which were formerly in favor against this amusement."¹

Others support this opinion, Jane Louise Mesick in painting the manners and customs of 1830 says, "American women were known to be voracious readers, particularly of novels."²

Perhaps it was necessary to adopt new measures for one writer in 1866, casting a retrospective glance, says, "The most rigid supervision never was effective (speaking of times past) and girls were no more kept from romance reading than from chalk and charcoal."³ By 1830 it is clear that restriction had failed. Furthermore it was unthinkable that the Puritans should ever again regain their power. Their direct control had been broken and their influence was on the wane. The moralists, those left over vestiges of Puritanism, were beginning to realize that all novels are not alike. Some, perhaps, sow the seed of corruption, some produce beneficial results, some have no moral significance. They now turned their energies to weeding out the bad ones.

An expression of this changed viewpoint is seen in a review of a novel, "The Forsaken," which appeared in the second decade of the nineteenth century. This reviewer writes, "The Forsaken" fails in what we conceive to be the main and only legitimate objects of fictitious writings-- it furnishes little amusement."

1. North American Review, pg. 79, Vol XV 1825.

2. The English Traveller in America, J. L. Mesick, pg. 93.

3. Free Fiction, Nation, February 1, 1886, pg. 138.

the graver part of the community, and to take off many restrictions, which were formerly in favor against this amusement." Others support this opinion. Jane Louise Meisick in painting the manners and customs of 1830 says, "American women were known to be voracious readers, particularly of novels." Perhaps it was necessary to adopt new measures for one writer in 1886, seeing a retrospective glance, says, "The most rigid supervision never was effective (speaking of times past) and girls were no more kept from romance reading than from chess and chess-boards." By 1830 it is clear that restriction had failed. Furthermore it was unthinkable that the Puritans should ever again regain their power. Their direct control had been broken and their influence was on the wane. The moralists, those left over vestiges of Puritanism, were beginning to realize that all novels are not alike. Some, perhaps, sow the seed of corruption, some produce beneficial results, some have no moral significance. They now turned their energies to weeding out the bad ones.

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2. The English Traveller in America, J. L. Meisick, pg. 93.
3. Free Fiction, Nation, February 1, 1886, pg. 138.

So far it would appear that this writer represents a change but he continues thus, "and that little is destroyed by the conclusion,----- it hath no moral and a story without a moral is as pointless as "The School for Scandal" would be were Joseph Surface stricken from the dramatis personae."¹ This reviewer also condemns the author for rendering crime familiar to his readers. Whoever does that should be condemned without qualification. This does show, however, that some novels rather than all novels were being banished.

"The two great objects of reading are intellectual and moral improvement. It is unworthy the dignity of rational beings to read solely for amusement."²

One who felt called upon to explain the dearth of good poetry incidently expressed himself in regard to the inferior class of novels then current. "While the spirit of the age is not favorable to the cultivation of poetry, we must at the same time make due allowance for the operation of another cause-- the influence of perverted taste. What else could induce men to welcome the inferior classes of romances, tales and novels, which are hourly poured forth from the press in multitudes which no man can number? A dark omen it would be if productions like these, on which the novel sentiment of the community ought to frown with deep, unequivocal, and stern indignation, shall permanently usurp the place

1. Nation, February 1, 1866, pg. 139.

2. The Ladies Magazine, Vol 1.pg. 145, 1828.

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1. Nation, February 1, 1856, p. 132.
 2. The Ladies Magazine, Vol. 1, p. 145, 1838.

of those which minister to the desires of our noble nature."¹

It would seem that after this strong utterance little quarter would be given anything resembling the novel. A little inconsistency may be expected, however, from one who writes in a heated moment. He makes it clear that Richardson is not in the class which he has previously mentioned. "One who is led by curiosity to read his novels, though he cannot fail to read them without interest, and to admire the purity of passion, can yet hardly form a conception of their popularity when they first appeared. Richardson taught the passions to move at the command of virtue."² After this it is not surprising to read: "Fielding and Smollett---did much to weaken the impression which Richardson had made; nor was it owing to any want of effort, that they failed to corrupt moral sentiment completely."³ At least one good novelist existed. He was Richardson.

In every age we have those who are ahead of their times. One liberal thinker has this to say, "Not many years ago the novel was a charm to compile up evil imaginations, and the fathers and mothers of New England started back and turned pale at the sound. At present there is scarcely a window seat or work table that is not occupied by three or four of these dapper volumes that the eye recognizes in a moment for the offspring of the novel writing muse. In truth their compositions have be-

1. "Studies in Poetry" G.B.Cheever, North American Review, pg. 443

2. Ibid. pg. 443 - 446.

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3. Ibid.

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come a necessity of life. It is a change for the better."¹

The author of "The Insurgents," generally acknowledged to be R. I. Lockwood, says in the preface, "A great many people who are not wiser than their contemporaries, pretend in our day, as others have done before them, that sensible men should not waste their time in writing or reading novels or romances; and condemn the whole literature of the whole world of fiction as entirely useless, if not pernicious.

"To enter into grave refutation of such an absurdity would be almost as great an absurdity as to utter it. There is one answer to all such precious nonsense, which is conclusive; and one is as good as a thousand. We must seek for amusement in this world, as well as instruction, and that which the young or old find in books, of any class, will ever prove, not only the most harmless, but the cheapest of all their pleasures."² Although the foregoing statement is not found in a periodical it is inserted here for the reason that it shows that novel reading was being actively defended by some.

A writer in the North American Review expresses himself in a similar manner. "When Sir James Mackintosh of India wiled away some of the tedious hours of exile by perusing novels and romances of which few were good, and many indifferent, he called himself to account for such an employment of time, and, in a

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rather elaborate essay, endeavored to prove that this class of works really merited the attention and serious study of the philosopher and the moralist. As these seductive books have relieved a portion of our own wakeful nights, and even pushed some of the grave labors of the day, we are quite willing to justify ourselves by the weight of his authority. We regard novels as vehicles of instruction, as furnishing the means of enlarging our experience as increasing our knowledge of men and things."¹ The very fact that certain ones felt that it was necessary or even cared "to justify" themselves implies that an attitude, not directly hostile, yet not favorable to novel reading, still existed as an unwritten law in the social conscience. Of course aside from this attitude everyone was free, at this time, in the legal sense to read novels. It seems certain that no actual restrictions existed other than those which could be felt through the social conscience.

In 1839 a writer (name not given) in the Southern Literary Messenger tells of his experience in novel reading. He began by chance to read novels. "Accident threw in my way the works of Smollett and Fielding-- I was so charmed with their amusing qualities that I was unconscious of the poison that lurked beneath them."² This writer was a lawyer and his fondness for novels ruined his business. "My ruling passion, not only im-

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paired my powers of reasoning and investigation, but destroyed the balance of my mind by giving an undue preponderance to the imagination."¹ Later in life he failed in love so he writes, "I could trace the principal calamities of my life to that overweening fondness for novel reading which had destroyed the vigor and activity of my mind, and disabled it alike for the purpose of business and the trials of study. To the same source --were attributable my severest disappointments both in love and ambition. I exhort my young readers to pursue only the best works of this kind, and to abstain altogether from them while their education is in progress."² This still further indicates that novels as a whole were not condemned. In fact from this point on no writings are noted which condemn all novels.

Could one writer have foreseen even in small measure the reign of the novel today the following would never have been written. "The palmy days of the novel are gone forever. Its age is past, like that of chivalry, whose decadence Burke could lament, but whose precise place in history he would have been puzzled to define. Have we not almost our hourly novels? Nevertheless, the reign of the novelists was over, like that of the Barbary consains, as soon as Christendom began to inquire whether there was any foreordained necessity for submitt-

1. Southern Literary Messenger, pg. 188. 1839.

2. Ibid.

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1. Southern Literary Messenger, pg. 186. 1832.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

ing to their exactions. Literature has taken what is called a useful direction, and the romantic fiction of the traveller, is gradually crowding out that of the novelist."¹ While admitting that novels abound he prophesies that they will soon be crowded out by books of travel. In that measure the prophecy was true we know. However, this expression does not represent a new point of view. In romances of travel we see again the utilitarian reason in another guise.

A unique point of view is expressed in the following, "Fiction has confessed its inferiority as an art, it has sought not to lead, but to follow; not to inspire, but to persuade. It no longer claims to have an end within itself; it labors and to no ultimate purpose. It has not only become a schoolmaster, but a treacherous one; one who puts on a forced, cruel smile, to entice his victim while he holds the rod behind his back, only waiting an unguarded moment to assume his natural look and his favorite office."² Didacticism had previously been sought rather than objected to. This reviewer probably had not a catholic taste. His preferences were indeed limited. "His illusions of old romance were, for a time, reviewed while the splendid magic of Scott ruled the hour. O, those were the happy days for readers! But the wondrous potentate resigned the throne, and left no successor."³

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A writer in the "Nation" of 1866, commenting upon the fiction works of the Boston Public Library, believes that "It will not do to undervalue works of fiction. Perhaps the poorest of them if they are not absolutely vicious, have their uses; an extremely bad novel may be as interesting as a good one."¹ Exception is taken, however, to those by Sir Bulwer Lytton such as "Alice," "Pelham," "Lucretia," and others.²

A brief résumé of the opinions of those writers who have expressed themselves since 1820 regarding the novel discloses that not one has condemned it unconditionally. On the other hand five writers unequivocally approve of novels. Five others conditionally approve of them, in general making the distinction between good ones and bad ones. An English traveller declares that in 1820 novel reading was common in America. One writer who neither condemned nor approved of them did predict that the romantic fiction of travel would supersede novels. The conclusion which is to be drawn from the evidence is clear. The prejudice against novels had largely disappeared by 1830. Some slight distrust of them, however, still existed. The objection from a utilitarian point of view lingered the longest.

In 1855 we read: "In this country there is nothing more readily, and universally grasped and consumed than the last novel. It is an instinct deep as any other, and the best genius of every time has dealt in forms of fiction."³ Quoting again from "Harpers,"

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2. Ibid.
3. "Editor's Easy Chair" Harpers pg. 128. June 1855.

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1. "Nation," pg. 132, 1866.

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3. "Editor's Easy Chair," Harper's pg. 138, June 1855.

"The completion of Thackeray's 'Newcomers' with its exquisite closing scenes of natural pathos, is almost the event of the month."¹ Whatever prejudice was still alive had no definite effect in suppressing novels.

Toward the close of the century Doctor George Clark wrote, "The effects of novel reading have been well compared with those of indulgence in opium or intoxicating liquors. While we are under the influence of a novel (especially one of the 'sentimental' variety) our cares and anxieties are for the time forgotten, and our reasoning faculties are allowed to rest, while our imagination is delighted--But this sort of indulgence is attended with danger for frequent repetition of it will produce habit and craving." The immoral novels are always known he adds and those who read them do so at their own risk. This writer also believes some novels are good. "It may seem to be an injustice to dwell upon the mischievous effects of the inferior grades of fiction, and to say nothing of the wholesome and elevating influence of the best novels. It is quite true that human thinking and conduct have benefitted from them to an extent that it would not be easy to overstate. They have raised the tone of morals and manners, and waged a successful warfare against cant, bigotry, and various sins of society."¹

An examination of the many prominent periodicals published between 1865 and 1900 discloses this single expression concerning

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2. Arena, 1898.

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the effects of novel reading. Dr. Clark believes that an attitude of discrimination will always be necessary. If good novels benefit to an extent "not easy to overstate" then certainly bad ones may corrupt. Today the attitude toward novels among thinking persons is likewise essentially one of critical appreciation and discrimination.

We may conclude that the problem of novel reading in America had been quite definitely settled by the middle of the nineteenth century. Since that time the vogue of the novel has steadily increased while adverse criticism of novels as such has been infrequent.

In the early days of colonization the spirit of the Puritan although not in absolute control was very strong. The founders of New England attempted to set up a theocracy, an ideal which was nearly realized. The ruling element, who were the clergy, succeeded in passing such strict laws as to have

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SUMMARY

We have noted the late appearance of fiction in America. It was not until 1789 that an American novel was published. We may cite as a partial cause of this absence of fiction the assertion of Cairns and Van Doren that a spirit of Puritanism existed which forbade fiction.

Is this assertion true? Our thesis is to determine what objections to the novel existed and their nature and extent. It is also our purpose to note the effect of these objections on the choice of subject of the first American novels.

In order to understand why the American Puritan should desire to prohibit novels at all the first chapter has been devoted to an examination of his character. We find evidence of an illiberal and a liberal Puritan spirit. In America Cotton Mather has been an example of the former while in England Milton has been an example of the latter. The writings of some of the American Puritans, such as "The Day of Doom" by Michael Wigglesworth, display the illiberal spirit. The strict laws against the wearing of wigs, the witchcraft trials, and the objection to art also reveal a spirit of intolerance and denial.

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mentioned and in dominating the press. Robert Calef, who attacked the Mathers, found it necessary to publish his manuscript in London.

Even after the clergy lost control their influence was not lost. The spirit of Puritanism went on as if by momentum.

The Puritan attitude toward literature was consistent with Puritan character. In writing their energies were directed on theological treatises and sermons. Some "narratives of captivity" and Indian tales appeared which were written for religious edification. The first books printed were of a religious nature, as an example "The Wicked Man's Portion" and "The Saybrook Platform of Church Discipline." Libraries were scarce but in general the books they contained were of a religious character. Some classical works were present but the absence of plays and novels is noticeable.

The drama was looked upon unfavorably. Permission was refused in 1713 to act a play in the Council House in Boston. In 1790 after a struggle, permission to present plays was obtained. Even in Philadelphia a large part of the community kept aloof from such presentations. In 1800 the pulpits still fulminated against them although interest in drama was gradually increasing.

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ition to understand his attitude toward novels.

By novel or romance he may have had in mind the "picaresque" romance of Nash, the "realistic" novel of Defoe, or the "sentimental" novel of Walpole. Evidence indicates that through Richardson and Godwin the "sentimental" and "Gothic" novels were well known. The first American novelists patterned their works on these two. Richardson's influence was great for he professed to teach morality.

Many openly opposed novel reading. Thomas Wilde a minister cautions his readers to read no "romances." Jonathan Edwards attempted to discipline some youths of his congregation for reading "Pamela." John Trumbull gave Richardson credit for ability "to turn the brain" and deplored his influence. Timothy Dwight, one time President of Yale, in his "Travels" points out the deleterious effect of novel reading. They unfit one for reality and heat the imagination. In addition the many anonymous novelists in America testify to the unpopularity of novels.

The effect of the proscriptions on the early novel was to direct the choice of subject to themes that taught morality. Mrs. Morton's "Power of Sympathy" and Susanna Rowson's "Charlotte Temple" are examples. The assertion that novels were lies brought forth the claim of many of the early novelists that their themes were "founded on truth"

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 Many openly opposed novel reading. Thomas Wolfe a minister cautioned his readers to read no "romances." Jonathan Edwards attempted to discipline some youths of his congregation for reading "Fables." John Trumbull gave Richardson credit for ability "to turn the brain" and deplored his influence. Timothy Dwight, one time President of Yale, in his "Travels" points out the deleterious effect of novel reading. They unfit one for reality and heat the imagination. In addition the many anonymous novels late in America testify to the unpopularity of novels.
 The effect of the prescriptions on the early novel was to direct the choice of subject to themes that taught morality. Mrs. Norton's "Power of Sympathy" and Hannah Rowson's "Charlotte Temple" are examples. The assertion that novels were lies brought forth the claim of many of the early novelists that their themes were "founded on truth."
 Carl Van Doren states that as the native novelists appeared in number denunciation increased. Evidence of these denunciations

tions appeared in the various periodicals of the day. Before the eighteenth century writers in the "American Magazine" and in the "Royal American Magazine" hint that novels are not useful. An article in the "Pennsylvania Magazine" even accuses the generality of novelists of having criminal purposes. On the other hand the "Boston Magazine" shows a liberal policy. In it are found eulogies of both Richardson and Sterne. A later "American Magazine" reverts to criticism of novels with again the objection that they are not useful.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century more criticism breaks forth. An "Essay on the Modern Novel" states that women who read novels are unfitted for matrimony. The "Port Folio" speaks of them as the powder engines with which the seducer attacks the female heart. In the "Ladies Magazine" they are said "to minister to the worst passions of the human breast."

The third decade of the century witnessed a change. An attitude of discrimination between good and bad novels is now more apparent. In fact active defenders of the novel appeared. R. I. Lockwood believed that it was a gross absurdity to assert that "the whole world of fiction is useless, if not pernicious." After 1820 whatever criticism of novels yet lingered was in general a form of the utilitarian objection that they were useless.

The testimony of McMaster and J. L. Mesick leads us to conclude that between 1790 and 1830 interest in novels increased. Many were reading them, they testify, during this period. Other evidence which we have just quoted bears out the conclusion that

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Many were reading them, they testify, during this period. Other evidence which we have just quoted bears out the conclusion that

it was between 1780 and 1820 that novels encountered most criticism. More fiction reading evidently meant more criticism. As we have seen criticism of novels dropped off sharply after 1820. It is not our intention to fix an exact date but with a degree of certainty we can say that by 1840 or 1850 novel reading had become a popular pastime. — *Choice*

Stowe, F.B.

Sutton, W.B.

Cambridge History of American Literature.

Cambridge History of English Literature.

Catalogue of the University of Chicago.

Dodge, F.B.

Boiler, J.

Oright, J.

Burt, J.H.

Frank, J.

Salbeck, F.T.

Accepted as a

wholesome &

Beneficial interest

Field, Frank, John, Robert, Sherman, Carl Van Dine, Putnam's Sons, 1910.

J.F. Waller. New York, 1910.

Stowe, F.B. 1910.

Stowe, F.B. 1910.

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American Magazine	1743 -- 1747
Arena	1890 -- 1909
Columbian Centinel	1790 -- 1840
Harpers	. . . . .	1850 -- 1930
Independent Chronicle	. . . . .	1778 -- 1803
Ladies Magazine	. . . . .	1828 -- 1833
Massachusetts Magazine	. . . . .	1789 -- 1796
Nation	. . . . .	1865 -- 1930
New England Magazine	. . . . .	1831 -- 1835
North American Review	. . . . .	1815 -- 1930
Pennsylvania Magazine	. . . . .	1775 -- 1776
Port Folio	. . . . .	1801 -- 1827
Royal American Magazine	. . . . .	1774 -- 1775
Southern Literary Messenger	. . .	1834 -- 1864
The Boston Magazine	. . . . .	1783 -- 1786
The Tablet	. . . . .	May 1795- Aug. 1795

PERIODICALS

1793 -- 1797	.....	American Magazine
1800 -- 1808	.....	Arena
1790 -- 1840	.....	Columbian Centinel
1830 -- 1830	.....	Harpers
1778 -- 1803	.....	Independent Chronicle
1808 -- 1808	.....	Ladies Magazine
1788 -- 1793	.....	Massachusetts Magazine
1800 -- 1830	Notion
1831 -- 1838	New England Magazine
1818 -- 1830	North American Review
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1801 -- 1827	Port Folio
1771 -- 1778	Royal American Magazine
1804 -- 1804	Southern Literary Messenger
1788 -- 1788	The Boston Magazine
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